

To: Vancouver City Council and Mayor

From: Ian Robertson

Resident of Vancouver, living in Fairview, about 1.5 blocks from the subject site.

Speaking on behalf of myself, my partner, and our 10 month old son.

Moderate income housing is vital for the future vitality of the city. Though we live near the site, in the last few years we have lived here, we would no longer be able to afford to rent our own apartment anymore, especially with the birth of our first child.

Opponents of this plan suggest the tower can just be shorter, or that 'we can build two shorter ones' present strawman options which do not actually exist. To make the tower shorter, while still requiring the same fraction of moderate income units quickly makes the project unviable. I was involved in the initial process for the creation of another MIRHPP [full disclosure, I do work in architecture, but have nothing to do with any of this tower's proponents save an interest in it, because it, and those living in it, will hopefully soon be my welcome neighbours], but that project has stalled due to high construction costs. That tower required at least 12 stories (and actually more like 14 stories) in an area otherwise allowing a 5 story condo, to be even barely viable.

Let us also ignore the 'build two' comment, unless the person making it wants to give away a second piece of land nearby, because the cost of housing in Vancouver is mostly tied to the value of the dirt underneath, although with building costs increasing 10% year on year for at least the last several years, the cost of construction is doing its hardest to catch up.

The following slides address some comments I have heard frequently from those in opposition to the tower:

- That it stands out too much compared with its context (ignoring the fact that in Vancouver, context surely includes the fact that we are in a Housing Emergency, with <1% vacancy rates generally, and 0.5% vacancy rates nearby)
- That the tower will relegate everything to its north in perpetual shadow, forever blotting the sun from the sky (I'm paraphrasing).

Please note, if you can't see the tower, its shadow can't see you, and that which a shadow can never hit can never 'suffer' the affects of its shade.

Broadway between Granville and Hemlock

Legend
★ Dr



This is a view toward the site from the West, taken from Google Earth, which uses about a 35mm lens - which replicates the extent of our view well. No camera completely captures the way we ‘actually’ see the world, and please don’t let anyone tell you otherwise, but a 35mm lens captures our angle of vision quite well.



A previous presentation went on at length how a 50mm lens is considered standard, but that lens replicates only one aspect of our vision, not all, so an overreliance on this absolute 'fact' is just technocratic officiousness. Please note, I've replaced the ugly + distracting orange mass used previously, with something more relevant to our context.

Broadway between Granville and Hemlock

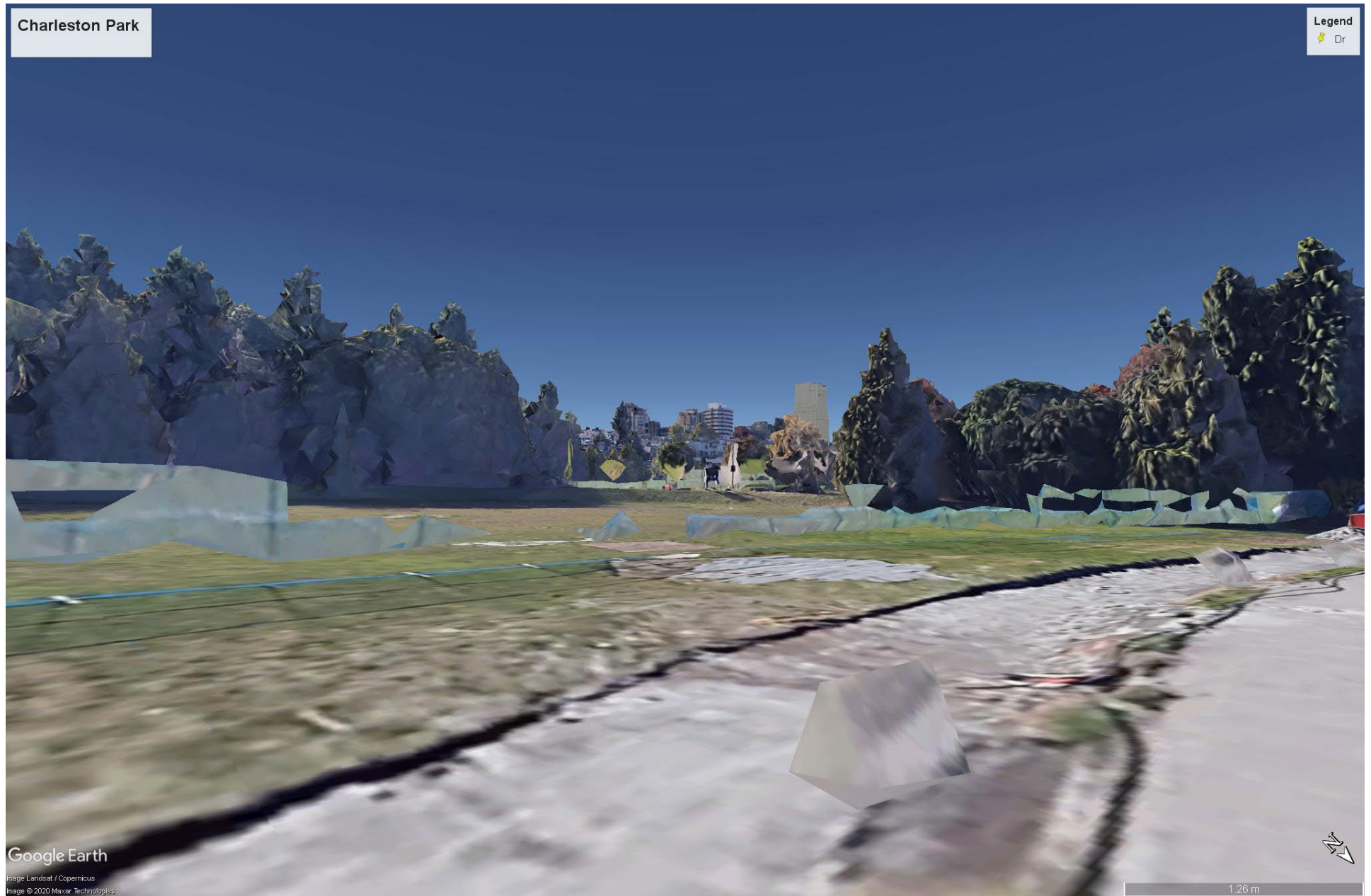
Legend
★ Dr



Google Earth

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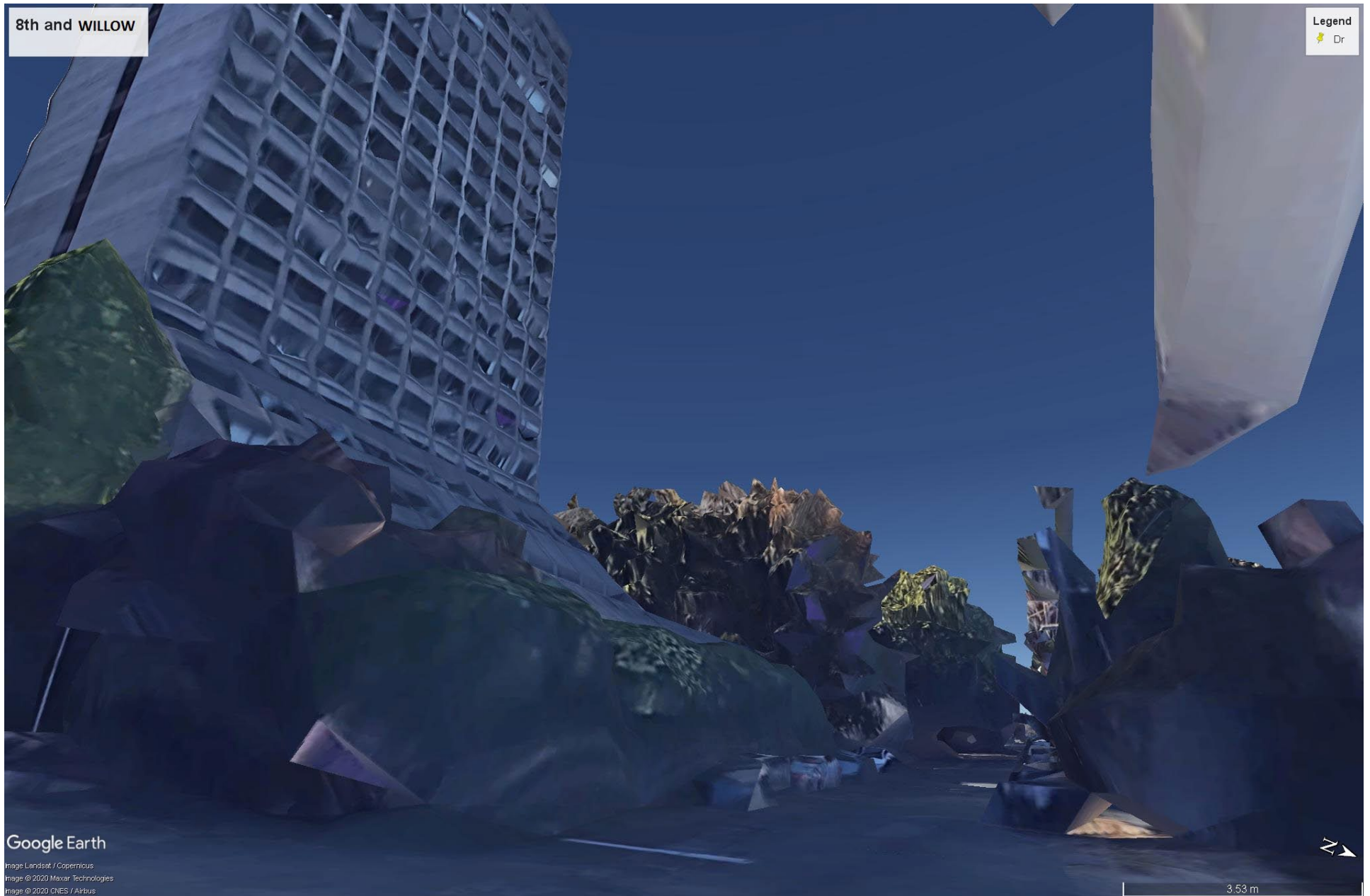
Using this 35mm view, the tower, though tall, doesn't actually seem out of place at all because of parallax. It is hard to tell how tall any tower is because there isn't any consistent horizontal datum - the surprisingly underdeveloped lowrise commercial in the foreground interrupts any architectural rhythm that might otherwise give clue to height.



Because View Cones seem so important in this city, let's use that concept and examine the view from what I would consider a relevant 'view cone' of the site, as taken from the seawall, standing by Charleston Park. Here, the tower is not only not overly large, it is not even that noticeable between the trees.



From Laurel Street Overpass, ditto, the prominence is little different than the towers at 5th and Granville.



This is the view from 8th and Willow, and while the Jimmy Pattison Pavilion has been mentioned tonight, this one hasn't, from Broadway it is 'only' 21-22 stories tall, but from 8th it is 24-25 stories. Please note that the new tower is not visible.



From 8th and Laurel, please note, the tower is still not visible.



From 8th and Oak, please note that the tower is still invisible.



On 8th, between Oak and Spruce, and amazingly(!), you can finally see the tower ... but if any councillor has good enough eyesight to see where, I would be very surprised. I made the image and can barely find the thing.



As a side-note, I looked whether I can see the tower from my front door on 8th, and the answer is no, my neighbour is concerned with the tower impacting their view however, and as shown above I discovered that it would, a bit ...



... however Google Earth does not capture the tree in front of the building which actually gets completely in the way of the view, so I'll let you judge how much impact the tower could actually have on this view. This will be true of very many such views - even theoretical views of the tower don't really actually exist.



At 8th and Spruce, please note, the tower is again invisible, and please remember, if you can't see the tower, its shadow can't affect you.

8th and Alder

Legend

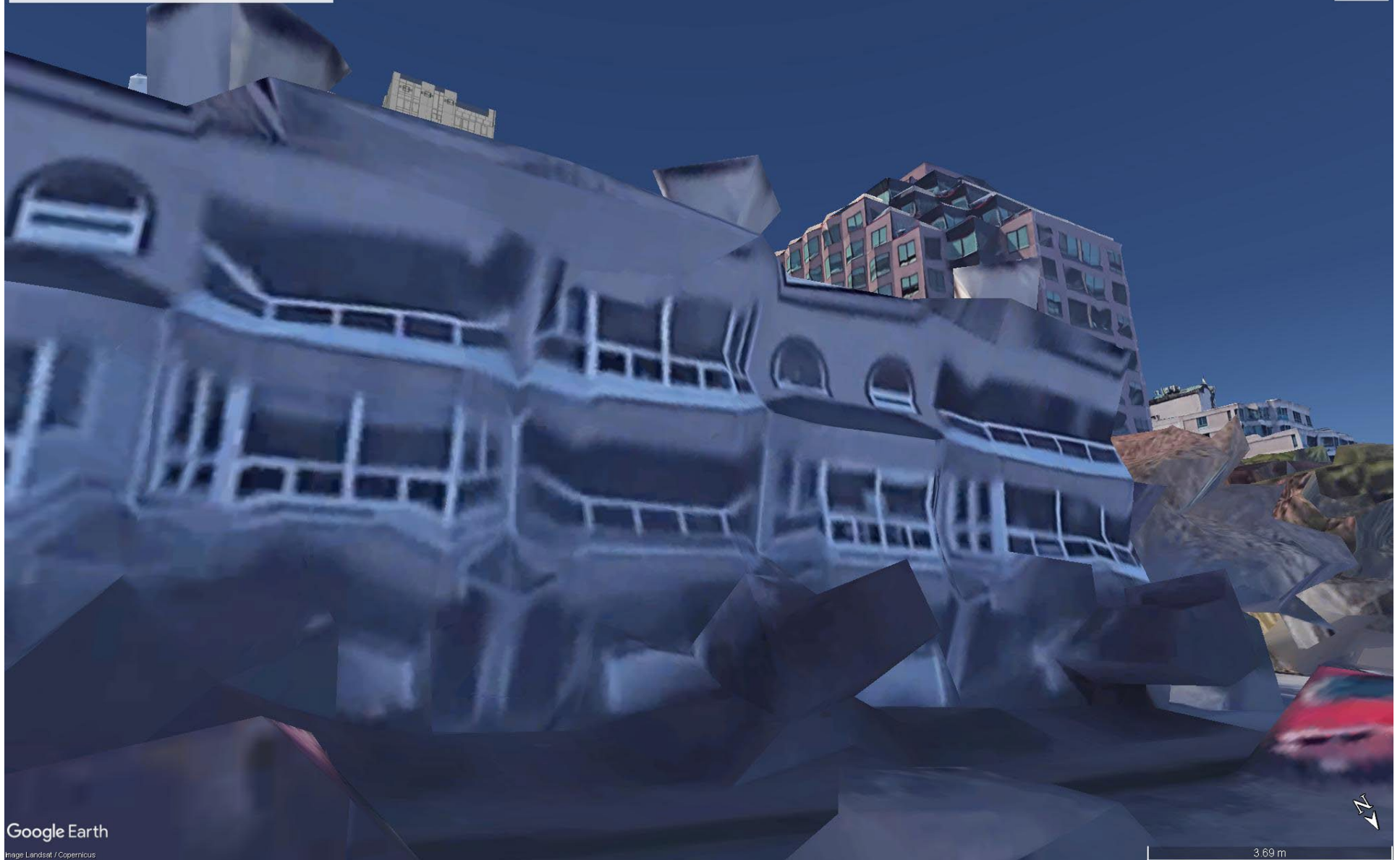
Dr



At 8th and Alder, one block away from the project, the tower is finally visible, but again, not very.

8th directly North of the 28 Story Tower

Legend
Dr



On 8th, directly North of the tower, and across the street, the tower is barely visible above the building on the South side of the street ... in fact, it sticks up about as much as a rooftop guardrail would, so not much at all.



Then, standing at 8th and Birch, the tower is definitely visible, but much less bulky than the existing building which exists without controversy on the North side of the street. Please note, due to the slope of the site, the tower is not visible from any location on 7th (that I can tell), other than at the intersection with Birch, with a similar view to this.



Finally, there has been a well publicized image again with the big Orange building, this is taken from a penthouse apartment near 14th and Granville. I want to present this image as a rebuttal, taken from the rooftop of an older building at 15th and Granville, please note the 15th and Birch building is invisible, and blocked by the very building the other photo is taken from - this highlights what happens in the city, your view changes in ways you can't control, and it is not Council's job, or anyone else's to protect the private view of anyone's penthouse, no matter how orange and obnoxious anyone makes their render.

I made a few videos of the tower as viewed from Broadway, I understand they won't play very well on WEBX, but here are the links for you to view:

https://youtu.be/Dn5-AIOVt_w



View starting at Heather St on Broadway traveling West toward the site.

<https://youtu.be/gj1yB1DEraY>



View starting at Yew St on Broadway traveling East toward the site.

Please note how it is close to impossible to judge the height of the towers as you pass by compared to one another if you don't carefully count floors.

Best Regards
Ian Robertson
Fairview, Vancouver